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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [EFIN](#) [KHLs](#) [KPAO](#) [SR](#)

SUBJECT: SAM: 2005 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM V2

REF: A. 05 STATE 193439

[B](#). 05 BELGRADE 2320

[C](#). 05 BELGRADE 681

[D](#). 05 BELGRADE 1767

[E](#). 05 BELGRADE 937

[1](#). (u) General Assessment/Cooperation: The USG has an overall excellent working relationship with Serbia and Montenegro (SaM) on counter-terrorism issues. Both policy-level and operational-level interlocutors have been eager to cooperate with the USG on a wide range of issues including border security, information sharing, anti-terrorism financing, export control, and the like. Internally, the GoSaM has shown a consistently strong commitment to counter-terror and anti-terror operations. In 2005, the SaM MFA created a new directorate to coordinate counter-terror and anti-terror policies and assistance, though it has been slow to organize itself. Also, the MoD's 2005 defense strategy highlights GWOT as one of the new fundamental organizing principals for a revamped Serbia and Montenegrin Armed Forces (SMAF) (ref c). In addition, SaM has been negotiating with the USG an agreement on countering proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the agreement should be in place by mid-2006.

[2](#). (u) Sanctuary and Terrorist Groups: While still largely complacent about the prospect of an attack in SaM by international terrorists and confident that SaM will not become a terrorist safehaven, Belgrade officials are significantly concerned about the potential for a rise in Middle Eastern terrorist transit through Serbia. In mid-August 2005, Serbian Interior Ministry services announced they had arrested 22 year-old Moroccan Abdelmajid Bouchar in June (ref d). The Spanish government had been seeking Boucher, a member of al-Qaeda, for his suspected role in the 2004 Madrid bombings that killed 191 people and injured an additional 1500. A Serbian police officer arrested him while he was traveling via train between Subotica and Belgrade on a false Iraqi passport. This follows implementation of improved security measures in Serbia since March 2004, especially increased checks of foreign nationals of Arab origin.

[3](#). (u) Comment: SaM would benefit greatly from increased U.S. assistance and training in order to boost its counter-terrorism capabilities, which in turn would help meet U.S. goals of preventing a stable terrorist network from developing in the Balkans. Such assistance could include, but is not limited to, further education for government and business on dual-use controls; anti-terrorism training assistance; and assistance and training for the newly-formed counter-terrorism coordination office in the MFA. The USG could also move ahead swiftly in helping to train, equip, and otherwise assist Serbian military and civilian security structures to enhance their CT and NP capacities and advance key USG GWOT and counter-proliferation goals in the process. Some steps are already underway through the EXBS program, but much more could be done with targeted assistance through ATA and other mechanisms (ref e).

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